



# Arkansas Department of Education

*Division of Elementary and Secondary Education*

Johnny Key, Secretary

Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner

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CONTACT: Kimberly Mundell

PHONE: (501) 683-4788

[kimberly.mundell@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:kimberly.mundell@ade.arkansas.gov)

## Weighted Courses the Focus of New Campaign

**LITTLE ROCK** — Working to make students and their families aware of a slate of approved weighted courses that are career- and workforce-focused, rigorous, and demanding is the centerpiece of a new, statewide Arkansas Department of Education public awareness initiative. This campaign will be highlighted on ADE’s social media platforms and websites and will continue through mid-May.

These courses have been approved by an internal team at ADE’s Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and Division of Career and Technical Education and will be available to students during the 2021-2022 school year. The classes are weighted, which means that due to the increased course rigor, students are graded on a 5.0 scale instead of the regular 4.0 grading scale. This gives students the opportunity to increase their grade point average while learning and gaining real-world skills, which will help them gain entry-level employment or pursue a two- or four-year degree after high school graduation.

“Act 623 of 2019 and the leadership of the General Assembly gave DESE and DCTE the tools needed to collaborate on offering these courses,” Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, deputy commissioner of DESE, said. “These classes will give our students more learning opportunities that are rigorous and challenging. At the same time, these class also allow students to explore and learn about careers they may be interested in pursuing. This demonstrates how our students and schools can benefit when committed and focused professionals work together.”

The courses cover a wide-range of offerings, including career and technical courses and newly-adopted computer science and computing courses. For instance, higher-level computer science classes include cyber security, game design, and computer programming. Other classes include civil engineering, agriculture, and aerospace engineering. The courses may replace students’ math and science graduation credits.

Understandably, not all classes will be available at each high school, but ADE is actively encouraging interested students and their families to contact their high school counselor to learn what will be offered at their local school. To learn more, go to <https://bit.ly/2PHyxH4>.

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